

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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P R 142200Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4717
INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 3934

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDOR PDIP PORG PLOS EC
SUBJ: AYALA BECOMES FOREIGN MINISTER

1. SUMMARY: JOSE AYALA WAS SWORN IN AS FOREIGN MINISTER AND GAVE A CAUTIOUS OUTLINE OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY GOALS. INCLUDED WAS A BID FOR A BETTER DIALOG WITH PERU ON BOUNDARIES, A PLEDGE TO FIGHT THE GSP EXCLUSION, AND A BOW TO ECUADOR'S TERRITORIAL SEA AND SPACE CLAIMS. NOT INCLUDED WAS ANY OTHER MENTION OF THE US NOR ANY DIRECT REFERENCE TO THE THIRD WORLD. GIVEN AYALA'S BACKGROUND, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT AYALA WILL BE TOUGHER TO DEAL WITH THAN SALVADOR. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE MILITARY, EAGER FOR US SECURITY COOPERATION, WILL PROBABLY WATCH HIM CLOSELY.

2. JOSE AYALA LASSO WAS SWORN IN AS FOREIGN MINISTER BY THE SUPREME COUNCIL IN A FORMAL CEREMONY AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE ON JUNE 13. FOLLOWING CUSTOM, AYALA SPOKE FOR ABOUT 20 MINUTES ABOUT HIS GOALS, PLANS, AND ATTITUDES. DURING THE ADDRESS, AYALA WAS AT PAINS TO STRESS CONTINUITY AND THE IMMUTABILITY OF CERTAIN ECUADOREAN FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES. SPECIFICALLY
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HE:
---RECOGNIZED THE ICONS OF THE 200 MILE TERRITORIAL SEA AND THE CLAIM OVER THE GEOSYNCHRONOUS ORBIT,
---PROMISED TO REMAIN FIRM AGAINST THE MAINTENANCE OF THE GSP EXCLUSION CLAUSE IN THE US TRADE ACT,
---PLEDGED HIMSELF TO STRENGTHEN THE FRIENDLY CREATIVE DIALOGUE WITH PERU WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO JUST AND WORTHY RESOLU-

TION OF THE TERRITORIAL PROBLEM "WITHIN REALISTIC FORMULAS WHICH CORRESPOND TO AN HONORABLE CONCILIATION."
---ASSIGNED TOP PRIORITY TO THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY QUESTION WITHIN THE PURSUIT FOR THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER,
---MADE THE OBLIGATORY REFERENCES OF SUPPORT FOR THE ANDEAN PACT, LAFTA, OAS, UN AND SELA.

3. AYALA ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THE NEED TO COORDINATE FOREIGN POLICY CLOSELY WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES. HE CONCLUDED SAYING THAT WHILE ACTING ON THE BASIS OF CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES, ECUADOR WILL BE REALISTIC. IT WILL TRY ABOVE ALL TO DEFEND AND INSURE ITS RIGHTS AND INTERESTS, PROMOTING BETTER RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES IN THIS EFFORT.

4. COMMENT: AYALA'S REMARKS WERE DRY, AND CAUTIOUS. OF NOTE WERE HIS COMMENTS ON PERU WHICH WERE SOMEWHAT LESS AGGRESSIVE AND MORE ANODYNE THAN THOSE OF HIS PREDECESSOR AND CERTAINLY MORE CONCILIATORY THAN THOSE OF ARMANDO PESANTES, SALVADOR LARA'S PREDECESSOR. ALTHOUGH HIS REMARKS ON GSP EXCLUSION WERE COUCHED IN NON-INFLAMMATORY LANGUAGE, THAT THIS WAS HIS ONLY REFERENCE TO THE US IN SPEECH IS NEITHER ENLIGHTENING NOR ENCOURAGING. AYALA'S SEVERAL BOWS TO "REALISM", HOWEVER, AND THE LACK OF ANY REFERENCE AT ALL TO G-77 OR THE THIRD WORLD PER SE CAN BE CONSIDERED FAVORABLE PORTENTS.

5. SALVADOR'S REPLACEMENT BY AYALA CAN PROBABLY NOT BE LOOKED UPON AS A NET GAIN FOR OUR INTERESTS. ALTHOUGH HE WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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DEVOUT BELIEVER IN HISPANIDAD, SALVADOR'S APPRECIATION OF A POTENTIALLY BENEFICIAL SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE US AND LATIN AMERICA HAD HELPED TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. AYALA, THE EPITOME OF ECUADOR'S FOREIGN SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT (SEE QUITO'S A-1), IS LIKELY TO BE MORE RESERVED THAN SALVADOR, MORE ZEALOUS IN MAINTAINING ECUADOR'S FACE, AND THEREFORE A TOUGHER AND MORE SUBBORN NEGOTIATOR. WHILE CERTAINLY NOT ANTI-US, AYALA HAS A TENDENCY TO LOOK ASKANCE AT OUR MOTIVES AND BE GRUDGING WITH CONCESSIONS. FOR INSTANCE, AYALA REACTED MUCH MORE NEGATIVELY TO THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AS BEING INTERVENTIONIST THAN SALVADOR, WHO, AFTER SOME INITIAL WAFLING, PRAISED IT IN SANTIAGO AND BUENOS AIRES.

6. ON THE OTHERHAND, AYALA IS KNOWN TO HAVE HIS CRITICS AMONG THE MILITARY AND WE SUSPECT THAT HIS ASSIGNMENT WAS MADE NOT OUT OF CHOICE, BUT OF EXPEDIENCY TO FILL QUICKLY AN EMBARRASSING GAP LEFT BY SALVADOR'S UNSCHEDULED DEPARTURE. (SEE SEPTTEL). IF SO, AYALA WILL PROBABLY BE PLACED ON A SHORT LEASH, A PROSPECT

NOT UNFAVORABLE TO OUR INTERESTS. HOWEVER, HOW MUCH THE MILITARY
IS WILL ING TO CHECK AYALA'S OBSERVED TENDENCY TO ADOPT
POSITIONS LIKELY TO NETTLE THE US MAY DEPEND ULTIMATELY UPON
THE MILITARY'S APPRAISAL OF HOW COOPERATIVE THE US WILL BE
IN THE SECURITY SPHERE.
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